

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

APPROVED Minutes

October 15, 2020

Meeting occurred via WebEx Teleconferencing

Chair Ford called meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Bob Ford (Chair), Lynda Earle (Vice Chair), Scott Markow (Vice Chair), Bianca Chang, Mabrooka Chaudhry, Joan Hash, Peter Hwang, Joshua Kaufmann, Leslie Salgado-Tamayo, Gabriel Terrasa, Kui Zhao, and Jonathon Di Pietro (Student Commissioner).

Staff Present: Yolanda F. Sonnier (Executive Secretary)

Legal Counsel: Melissa Goldmeier

Meeting Attendees Present: Keith A. Merkey, Education and Outreach Associate of Maryland Commission on Civil Rights present only to observed and Songeeta Guha, spoke during the immigration report, testimony reflected in the below Immigration Report.

I. PUBLIC FORUM

No Public present.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Gabriel made a motion to approve the September 17, 2020 minutes. Lynda seconded the motion. All Commissioners in attendance voted in favor of accepting the minutes, as distributed. **The September 17, 2020 minutes were approved.**

III. CHAIR'S REPORT – BOB

Bob thanked the immigration committee for hard work and the final report. Bob mentioned there is a Charter amendment to change the term for commissioners from five years to three years. Bob mentioned that Howard County Coalition for Immigration and Justice has a response for the CB-51 veto.

IV. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY REPORT

Yolanda reported that OHR's case load has evened out. Yolanda mentioned that we have 40 cases currently and we did meet out EEOC contract numbers which was 57 cases for the last 12 months. Yolanda stated that the Police Department reported 6 Hate Bias Incidents for September. Yolanda mentioned the LGBTQ workgroup will meet on October 20 and have several presentations. Yolanda mentioned that Gab is the Representative of the La Alianza workgroup, and the workgroup will meet again on November 10, 2020 @ 6pm. Yolanda mentioned several trainings and presentations were offered and conducted by OHR in the month of September. Yolanda mentioned two positions are still open in the Office of Human Rights and interviews are currently being conducted.

V. STUDENT REPORT

Jonathan reported that he continues to work on the MPIA request for the HBIs within the schools. Jonathan states that he will contact central office directly or Police Department. Jonathan also reports that he continues to work on the student's demonstration bill and completed a brief and will provide a copy to each commission member for comments. Joshua suggested that when Jonathan approaches Central Office to make sure to mention that he is a student commissioner member of HRC.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. **Nominating:** No report.
- b. **Awards:** Bianca mentioned that the photos were taken for the HRC ceremony and the process went well. Bianca mentioned the actual awards ceremony will take place on October 22, 2020. Bianca went through the HRC awards ceremony sequence of events. Joan mentioned she is sending out a letter, which Gab and Lynda drafted, to all the HRC award nominees who were not winners. Commissioners discussed a rehearsal of the HRC awards ceremony. Yolanda discussed whether should keep the awards ceremony in October or whether we are moving the ceremony back to April.
- c. **Outreach:** No report.
- d. **Civic Participation (Census/Voting):** No report.
- e. **Hate Crimes:** No report.
- f. **Legislation:** No report.
- g. **Immigration:** The immigration committee submitted their immigration report. Joan stated that the report was issued on the two topics at hand; termination of the ICE contract and establishment of immigration status in the Code. Peter discussed the ICE contract and stated that they researched the contract and policies surrounding these issues. Scott discussed the Code issue and mentioned the commission looked at other local communities/surrounding counties to see what their experience has been with adding immigration or citizen status within the Code. Peter stated that the County Council passed their proposed legislation and the County Executive stated he will veto legislation. Joan and Scott mentioned the County Executive did, in fact, veto the legislation last week. Leslie read a letter from the coalition regarding CB-51. The commissioners discussed the ICE contract and report in depth. Public guest, Songeeta Guha, provided her perspective on the ICE contract, etc. The commissioners discussed providing a response to the coalition's statement. Scott led the discussion regarding the Code issue in further details and other commissioners joined in the conversation. Yolanda explained how adding the immigration/citizenship status cause of action would affect the office. Leslie made a motion and Josh seconded the motion that the commission's report be released to the public. Commissioners were asked to vote regarding whether the commission's report should be released to the public. The motion failed. It was agreed that commissioners who choose to develop suggested language for motions on the two immigration issues prior to the November meeting forward it to the committee chair Joan Hash who will Summarize all of the proposed language received and send it out to everyone for review.

VII. NEW BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kui mentioned the Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning is reaching out to communities regarding HoCo By Design and they held their first public meeting and they need more community leaders.

VIII. CLOSED SESSION

Closed session was called to discuss an appeal case.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

- Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Joan and 2nd by Lynda. All Commissioner voted in favor meeting adjourned.
- Meeting Adjourned at 9:40 pm.